

REMARKS

Prior to the entry of this Amendment, claims 34-37 and 40-57 of this application drawn to a method of detecting a dispensed object, were pending.

By this Preliminary Amendment, Applicants have cancelled claims 34-37 and 40-57 of this application and have introduced new claims 58-130 directed to a vending machine and an optical vend-sensing system. Although the present application is a divisional application resulting from a restriction requirement of method claims 34-37, 40-57, and 68-74 of the parent application (Appln. No. 09/261,221 (see, Notice of Allowance, page 2, par. 1)), at this time, Applicants prefer to pursue the prosecution of the new machine and system claims. Applicants fully reserve the right to pursue the prosecution of method claims 34-37, 40-57, and 68-74 in a continuation application. Accordingly, only claims 58-130 remain pending for examination.

Applicants respectfully submit that the new claims 58-130 are fully supported by the original disclosure and do not contain any new matter.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as presented above, are in condition for immediate allowance. A notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

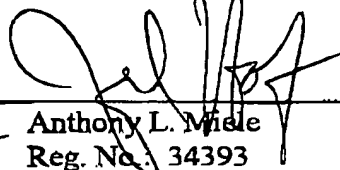
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Should there be any questions or concerns regarding this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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